

of the water by the irrigation company has been unavoidably delayed for months; but there is abundance of water, cheap and fertile lands and the enterprise to bring these conditions together is not lacking. It will be a matter of no great while, until this country will speak for itself as other parts of California do and the developments our friends and brethren are looking for will be sure to follow.

THE CONVENTION.

Much will no doubt be said of the grand success of our '96 convention. It would be a pleasure to talk it all over with anyone interested in the progress of the Brethren Church. Truly we are *progressing*. I will summarize and simply name the things that impressed me most forcibly.

1. The spirit of brotherly love that prevailed in all the meetings.
2. The universal consecration to His cause as shown by the membership in many ways.
3. The force and system with which our various organizations come forward. The Young People's Society and the S. S. C. E., were practically but initiated at the Warsaw '92 convention—just four years ago. Their growth in strength and system have been marvelous.
4. The readiness with which the older brethren turn over the work to the younger ones. One would not suppose by attending this convention that our "bishops and elders" are in any way related to those occupying seats on the "standing committee" and other prominent places in our sister church—the German Baptists.
5. The universal unanimity among all that the college debt must be paid. Even those who feel that the school cannot be practically run by the brotherhood, say as a matter of business the property must be cleared of debt.
6. The spirit of devotion shown in all meetings. Four years ago the idea by most was that the business must be transacted as speedily as possible so that all may return home. This year there was ample time for sermons, spiritual songs, sunrise and sunset prayer meetings, and no one seemed to be in a hurry to leave.
7. The arousing of all departments of the church to needs of the missionary cause. We will never grow as a church so long as our membership feels that we are a kind of self-constituted machine whereby we may escape eternal punishment and get for ourselves a good comfortable seat in heavenly mansions. That's about all we have been doing so far. We must reach out and make the dominant feature of our work to save others. Less of self—more of Christ.

8. That notwithstanding the fact that many of the brethren reason that our National Conferences should be held less frequently than once a year, yet the effort to adjourn for two years was very promptly voted out and we will again convene in 1897. Our record will then stand a convention every five years for the first ten years of the existence of the Brethren Church and a convention every year for the next five years. We will be fifteen years old when our convention meets in 1897 at Johnstown Pa., and the event should be appropriately celebrated.

OUR WARFARE.

J. S. C. SPICKERMAN.

A serious fault, which, as a church and as individuals, we should be careful to avoid, is a merely negative righteousness; one which emphasizes the "Thou shalt not" at the expense of the "Thou shalt." To refrain from war, oaths, secret societies, gay and costly dress, etc., is all right as far as it goes, but if our virtues consist altogether of the things that we do not do, our lives will be of little use in the world. Moreover, to lay great stress on God's negative commands without being equally faithful to the positive ones, brings discredit on the very truths which we do advocate.

As a church, we have always opposed carnal warfare, but have we been equally in earnest in prosecuting the spiritual warfare which God has commanded? The Bible not only says that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood," and that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," but it tells us what enemies we are to fight, and what weapons we are to use. Eph. 6: 11-17; 1 Thess. 5: 8. The church of Christ is not a party of tourists on a sleeping car, but an army enlisted for an aggressive campaign.

Our adversaries are "principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places." In our own hearts, we find the tempter ever present, ready to lead us into sin whenever we give him an opportunity. Without, we see Satan's vast forces of ignorance, selfishness and vice, encamped all over the world, strongly entrenched in law, and custom, and creed—an appalling host, like that which surrounded Elisha at Dothan.

For a sword, God has given us his Word. With it, Jesus put Satan to flight in the wilderness. With it, we are to overcome the sin within our hearts. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Ps. 119: 11. In it we should meditate day and night, that every thought and word and

act may be brought in subjection to God's will. With it, we are to go forth against every stronghold of Satan the world over. Our defensive armor is faith, love, truth, righteousness, the hope of salvation, and the gospel of peace. These weapons are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. II Cor. 10: 4. This is what the world refuses to believe—that any but carnal weapons are of any use in pulling down strongholds of evil. It is our privilege to prove, as has been proved many times already, that God's weapons are more powerful than all the bayonets, and cannon, and torpedoes, that man can invent. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4: 6.

War calls for zeal, earnestness, and self-denial. An army as half-hearted in the service of its government as the majority of professing Christians are in the service of our King, would meet certain defeat and disgrace. If the church were as much in earnest in the service of Christ as the armies of this world are in their battles, what might we not accomplish? Think of the dangers and hardships which the soldiers in the late war endured for the sake of the Union; of the hardships endured by those at home that they might aid the soldiers. Is our cause any less important than that for which they fought? Millions are being destroyed, soul and body, by the adversary. God has sent us forth "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and * * * break every yoke." Isa. 58: 6. "Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." II Tim. 2: 3.

FIRESIDE HAPPINESS.

The late Oliver Wendell Holmes once said that his idea of perfect happiness was when four feet were on the fender. During the latter part of his life, a friend, coming in and finding him in a dejected state of mind, asked "What is the matter, my friend?" Mr. Holmes looked up with a look of sorrow and said: "Don't you see? There are only two feet on the fender now." How much of the happiness of marriage relation is suggested by his idea, so touchingly expressed, and the pathos of after time? It seems startling to think how much may be perhaps unheedingly done by ourselves to destroy our fireside happiness.

"The Devil tells me," said Catherine von Bora to Luther, "that I am too great a sinner to be saved." And Luther, ever ready with a pungent reply, said, "Let him go and tell Christ so."—*Christian Observer*.